

“Water Safety Festival”

TOPIC/SUBJECT: Water Safety Festival

TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL: All ages

TIME: 6-8 hours

THEME: When taking part in water-based activities, one should always practice water safety.

GOAL/PURPOSE: To increase the visitor's knowledge of water safety, in turn, decreasing the number of accidents, injuries, and fatalities on the lake.

OBJECTIVE(S): Visitors will know water safety skills that they can use when recreating on/or in the water.

DESCRIPTION:

- A. Establish a date, time, and location of the event.
- B. Develop a list of topics/activities that you would like represented at the festival.
- C. Check area for various resources that could be used for the event. This could be boat dealers, water ski clubs, B.A.S.S. Master organizations, local, state, and federal agencies, personal watercraft organizations, etc. Establish a point of contact for these organizations and agencies, and keep them informed of the proceedings.
- D. Create a letter or festival newsletter that could be periodically sent to participants. Various articles applying to the event as well as water safety topics could be included in this newsletter. Perhaps participants would be interested in contributing an article to the newsletter.
- E. Establish a Water Safety Festival Committee, and assign members of the committee certain tasks so as to decrease your work load. For those lakes that have a Water Safety Council, this would be an excellent place to start. This committee should include a representative from each participating agency or organization (if possible). Involve the participants!
- F. Schedule dates for organizational meetings prior to the Water Safety Festival. These meetings will offer an opportunity for participants to discuss displays and presentation ideas, and to brainstorm on other possible persons or organizations that might be interested in becoming involved in the festival. Other topics discussed at these meetings include display set up and take down, scheduling of events for the day of, advertising and policies.
- G. Schedule a show on the event at a local television station. This show could be 1/2-1 hour in length. Encourage participating organizations to send a representative to take part in this show. Interviews on local radio stations and television news broadcasts is also a good source of passing the word.
- H. Develop posters advertising the event, and arrange printing the same.
- I. Arrange to have a sound system for the day of the event.
- J. Establish and mark land and water presentation areas.
- K. Volunteers could be used to assist in set-up, traffic control, and at displays. The Coast Guard Auxiliary could also provide assistance. Some local Coast Guard Auxiliary units provides safety patrols for the perimeter of the water demonstration area.

L. Arrange for a local radio station to do remote broadcasts from the festival (most radio stations will do this free of charge).

M. Plan/Develop a Corps display for the festival.

SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT: Corps display, buoys to mark the water demonstration area, some type of dock for participants to use, picnic tables (or other kinds) for displays, banners advertising the festival, and directional signs.

NOTE: If you wish to develop a Water Safety Festival, it is recommended to start small, and work your way up - it's a learning experience. The events/displays need to be entertaining as well as educational in order to attract and keep visitors interested. Also, avoid "down time" between presentations to keep the audience interested.